

**Saint Paul Planning Commission  
City Hall Conference Center  
15 Kellogg Boulevard West**

**Minutes February 23, 2007**

A meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of Saint Paul was held Friday, February 23, 2007, at 8:30 a.m. in the Conference Center of City Hall.

**Commissioners Present:** Mmes. Donnelly-Cohen, Faricy, Lu, Morton, Smitten, and; Messrs. Alton, Bellus, Dandrea, Goodlow, Johnson, Kramer, Nelson and Rosemark.

**Commissioners Absent:** Mmes. \*McCall, \*Porter, \*Trevino and Messrs. \*Commers, \*Cudahy, \*Gordon, \*Kong, and \*Mejia,

\*Excused

**Also Present:** Larry Soderholm, Planning Administrator; Patricia James, Donna Drummond, Lucy Thompson, Merritt Clapp-Smith, Luis Pereira, Yang Zhang, Jessica Rosenfeld, Andrew Jacobson (intern), and Kate Fleming, Department of Planning and Economic Development staff.

**I. Approval of minutes February 9, 2007.**

**MOTION:** *Commissioner Donnelly-Cohen moved approval of the minutes of February 9, 2007. Commissioner Morton seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.*

**II. Chair's Announcements**

Chair Alton announced Commissioner Commers had a baby daughter on February 17, 2007, and expressed his congratulations.

**III. Planning Administrator's Announcements**

Larry Soderholm reported on planning-related business at the City Council for last week and their agenda for next week.

#### **IV. Zoning Committee**

##### **NEW BUSINESS**

# 07-017-118 Kingdom Pathways, Freedom House – Rezoning from R4 (One-Family Residential) and RT1 (Two-Family Residential) to RM1 (Low Density Multiple-Family Residential). 426 Oxford St N, NE corner at Fuller and 1038 Aurora Avenue. (*Luis Pereira, 651/266-6591*)

**MOTION:** *Commissioner Morton moved the Zoning Committee's recommendation to deny the rezoning. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.*

# 07-017-129 Kingdom Pathways, Freedom House – Conditional Use Permit for two transitional housing facilities with 14 residents (Oxford) and 7 residents (Aurora). 426 Oxford St N, NE corner at Fuller and 1038 Aurora Avenue. (*Luis Pereira, 651/266-6591*)

**MOTION:** *Commissioner Morton moved the Zoning Committee's recommendation to deny the conditional use permit. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.*

# 07-013-828 Selby Area Community Development Corporation – Rezoning from B2 (Community Business) to TN1 (Traditional Neighborhood). (*Patricia James, 651/266-6639*)

**MOTION:** *Commissioner Morton moved the Zoning Committee's recommendation to approve the rezoning. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.*

# 07-017-328 Selby Area Community Development Corporation – Variances of parking (14 spaces required, 8 spaces proposed) and side yard setback (6 ft. required, 3 ft. proposed on east side, and 5ft. and 3 ft. proposed on west side) for an eight-unit mixed use development. 940 Selby Avenue between Chatsworth & Milton. (*Patricia James, 651/266-6639*)

**MOTION:** *Commissioner Morton moved the Zoning Committee's recommendation to approve the variances with conditions. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.*

Commissioner Morton announced the Zoning Committee Agenda for the March 1, 2007 meeting.

#### **V. Comprehensive Planning Committee**

Commissioner Donnelly-Cohen gave the Comprehensive Planning Committee report. The committee met on February 20, 2007, and discussed staff recommendations for the management of vegetation in the Mississippi River Critical Area Regulations. The next committee will be on March 20, 2007 and they will continue discussing the Critical Area regulations. The committee is shooting for a Planning Commission public hearing on this sometime in May.

Commissioner Donnelly-Cohen said the committee also discussed how to deal with crossover topics that will be significant in more than one chapter of the comprehensive plan, for example, sustainability, the Central Corridor, the *Invest Saint Paul* program, and city fiscal issues. The committee decided not to hold separate multi-task force meetings, but instead to assign primary responsibility for each topic to one of the comp plan task forces and have the task forces invite members of other planning task forces to their discussion of a crossover issue.

## **VI. Neighborhood and Current Planning Committee**

Highland Park (District 15) Small Area Plan Summary – Release summary for public review and set a public hearing date for March 23, 2007.

*(Merritt Clapp-Smith, 651/266-6547)*

Commissioner Nelson gave a brief report for the committee.

Commissioner Johnson asked if District 15 needs to revise the summary to include some of the developments that will occur on the Ford Plant Site property or had it been discussed.

Merritt Clapp-Smith answered that the District 15 Plan requests the City to undertake extensive planning to determine what would be appropriate on the Ford Plant property, which is what the City is now doing. No changes are needed in the plan.

***MOTION: Commissioner Nelson moved on behalf of the Neighborhood and Current Planning Committee to release the summary for public review and set a public hearing for March 23, 2007. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.***

## **VII. Communications Commission**

No report

## **VIII. Guest presentation**

Single-family and duplex rental properties: new inspection and enforcement program.

Guest Presentation and discussion with Marcia Moermond, City Council Research.

Marcia Moermond, City Council Research, gave a presentation on the Fire Certificate of Occupancy Program (C of O). The program will require non-owner-occupied properties have complete and periodic inspections. Fire C of O will be the program used to ensure non-owner – occupied buildings comply with applicable codes over time, following the issuance of an original C of O. It applies to all properties currently holding a C of O (commercial and residential) and non-owner-occupied single-family homes and duplexes. This proposal includes a shift from two year inspection cycles for C of O properties and annual renewal for rental registration properties to a tiered system based on property condition. To provide for systematic and equal classifications, this proposal includes a numerical point grading system to be adopted by resolution of the City Council. Fire Marshal Steve Zaccard has developed a deficiency list with corresponding point values. There is no proposal to change the renewal cycle for commercial buildings, and the Fire C of O will continue to be renewed on a 1 to 2 year cycle, depending on the hazard associated with the use.

The presentation included diagrams, tables, ordinance, and an informational packet was handed out.

Discussion followed the presentation.

## IX. Task Force Reports

Update on Central Corridor Development Strategy: Report on open houses on February 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>, and an update on the downtown alignment.

(Allen Lovejoy, 651/266-6576)

Donna Drummond gave a staff report on the Central Corridor Development Strategy process. A four page outline of the draft was handed out. It is not a summary of what is in the document but an overview of the graphically rich draft that is now out for public review. The University Avenue and the Capitol/Downtown Central Corridor Task Forces have started a detailed review of the document. She said the University Avenue Task Force will have three meetings in March.

Commissioner Smitten, Co-Chair of the Capitol/Downtown Central Corridor Task Force gave a brief report. The next meeting will be on Tuesday, 27, 2007. Discussion will be on comments for Central Corridor Development Strategy draft; there will be one more meeting to finalize comments and provide feedback.

Allen Lovejoy gave an update on the "Bennett Loop"--a proposal of the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority for an alternative alignment for LRT in downtown Saint Paul. Mr. Lovejoy briefly described the route. He said that both the County and the Metropolitan Council staff had evaluated the proposal, and copies of both studies were distributed. The County's consultant basically concluded that the alignment would cost more, increase travel times, and attract fewer passengers than the original Cedar/4th alignment. The Metro Council staff analysis, in addition to those findings, outlined operational issues with the loop and stated that further study of the loop would take at least 6 months. (City staff had estimated a 12 month process for reopening the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.)

As an illustration, Mr. Lovejoy stated that a commuter coming from the west and destined for Kellogg and Wabasha would get off the train in the morning. But in the evening, the return trip would require getting on the east-bound train again (since it is a one-way loop), traveling to the Union Depot (approximately 5 minutes), sitting at the Depot until the train began its west-bound journey (which could be up to 8 minutes), and traveling north to behind the Capitol before turning west on University Avenue. This movement could add an additional 20 minutes to the evening trip. City staff believes that this delay in travel time would discourage repeat ridership on the loop. Any gain from occasional riders coming to entertainment events would be more than offset by losses among downtown employees who ride every day.

Commissioner Johnson made a plea to stay the course of the Cedar/4th alignment so as to keep the project on schedule.

The Central Corridor discussion was for informational purposes. The Commission took no action.

### Other task force updates.

Commissioner Donnelly-Cohen reported that the first Transportation Comp Plan Task Force meeting was on February 22, 2007, which is chaired by Commissioner Commers. The task force discussed the *Scoping Report* and Commissioner Bellus presented the *Lens for the Future* which

put a lot of emphasis on transportation.

Commissioner Rosemark gave a brief report on the Ford Site Planning Task Force meeting on February 20, 2007. They discussed the charge to the task force, the history of the Ford Plant site, zoning, and the proposed revisions in the Critical Area overlay zoning that is currently under review. The next meeting will be on March 5, 2007; it will be a visioning session to establish initial goals and guiding principles.

**X. Old Business**

None

**XI New Business**

None

**XII. Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 10:27 a.m.

Recorded and prepared by  
Kate Fleming, Planning Commission Secretary  
Planning and Economic Development Department,  
City of Saint Paul

Respectfully submitted,

Approved \_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

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Larry Soderholm, AICP  
Planning Administrator

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Marilyn Porter  
Secretary of the Planning Commission